



MINUTES

City of Flagstaff Open Spaces Commission

Thursday, July 23, 2015
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm

City Hall, Staff Conference Room
211 West Aspen Avenue, Flagstaff, Arizona

A quorum of the Flagstaff City Council may be in attendance at the Open Spaces Commission meeting.



In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact 928-213-2175 (774-5281 TDD). Notification at least 48 hours in advance will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements.

CALL TO ORDER

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Rick Miller, Chair
Jessica Gist
Carrie Eberly
Bryan Burton
Tina Pfeiffer
Kristina Wyse

CITY STAFF:

McKenzie Jones
Nicole Woodman
Betsy Emery
Martin Ince
Rebecca Sayers
Stacy Saltzburg

COMMUNITY MEMBERS:

John Grahame
John Deuel

I. GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Call to Order

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 5:06 pm.

2. Public Participation

At this time, any member of the public may address the Commission on any subject that is not scheduled before the Commission on that day. The Arizona Open Meeting Law prohibits the Commission from discussing or taking action on an item which is not listed on the prepared agenda. Commission members may, however, respond to criticism made by those addressing the Commission, ask staff to review a matter, or ask that a matter be placed on a future agenda. To address the Commission on an item that is on the agenda, please wait for the Chair to call for Public Comment at the time the item is heard.

3. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Gist moved to approve April 29, 2015 meeting minutes. Commissioner Eberly seconded the motion.

4. Discussion Items

A. New Open Spaces Commissioner Introductions

This meeting served as an introduction to the Open Spaces Commission for Commissioners Pfeiffer and Wyse. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves and addressed two questions: (1) why are you interested in serving on the Open Spaces Commission, and (2) what do you think is the primary value open space plays in our community. Primarily, Commissioners interest in serving on the Commission stemmed from their personal passion for natural environments and outdoor recreation. Most Commissioners believe that open space is a key characteristic of the community and draws individuals to Flagstaff. Additionally, Commissioners expressed interest in developing a connected system of open space that is easily accessible throughout the community.

B. Purpose of the Open Spaces Commission

McKenzie Jones, Open Spaces Commission Staff Liaison, presented a brief introduction to the Commission, which was established in 2003 by a City Ordinance. The Commission is a direct result of the Regional Plan and was created to advise the City Council regarding acquisition, management, use, restoration, enhancement, protection, and conservation of open space land in the Flagstaff area. The Staff Liaison is responsible for working with the Chair to craft the agenda, coordinating logistics of each meeting, and recording minutes. In an effort to increase transparency, the Commission will be permanently moved to Council Chambers in September to allow for each meeting to be recorded and live-streamed for the public. The move should not affect the standard scheduling of the Commission meetings. Additionally, Ms. Jones informed the Commission that the Open Space Specialist will take over the Staff Liaison position for this Commission beginning in September.

C. Rules of Procedure

Stacy Saltzburg, Deputy City Clerk, provided a brief introduction to the rules of procedure for City Commissions. Open Meeting Law dictates many requirements for public meetings, including the requirement to agendaize each meeting and post meeting agendas at least 24 hours prior to each meeting. If an agenda must be changed, it should be amended. The Chair is responsible for maintaining the decorum of each meeting. Motions are an important tool for the Commission and must be utilized postpone a discussion to later in the meeting (motion to postpone) or to table the discussion for another meeting (motion to table). In order to run a successful meeting, it is important to provide adequate and timely notice to the public, promptly call each meeting to order, hold meetings in an adequate location, and allow time for discussion and public participation. If a Commissioner has a conflict of interest for a discussion, that individual must clearly state the conflict of interest at the beginning of the meeting and physically remove themselves for the discussion of that agenda item. Chair Miller raised concerns regarding Commissions meeting outside of the formal Commission meeting and requested clarification from Ms. Saltzburg. She recommended to avoid those types of meetings and if that isn't possible, to avoid discussion of Commission business. Additionally, Ms. Saltzburg clarified that Commissioners should avoid using the "Reply All" option when sending emails to the Staff Liaison to avoid a potential Open Meeting Law violation.

D. Recent History of Open Spaces Commission Efforts

McKenzie Jones, Open Spaces Commission Staff Liaison provided a brief history of the Open Spaces Commission. In 2004, the Flagstaff community initiated three separate bond initiatives to preserve open space within the community. A \$5.5

million bond was passed to acquire Observatory Mesa, a \$7.6 million bond to preserve neighborhood open space and acquire easements and property for the Flagstaff Urban Trails System, and a bond to preserve McMillan Mesa was not successful. Those bonds were used to acquire Picture Canyon Natural and Cultural Preserve, Observatory Mesa Natural Area, and the Thorpe Open Space Parcel (which is now included in Observatory Mesa Natural Area). The bond funds were used in conjunction with grant funding from the Arizona State Parks Growing Smarter Grant to purchase Picture Canyon and Observatory Mesa. In 2013, the Commission completed a comprehensive review of 17 City-owned parcels to determine the City's plans for each parcel and each parcel's potential for open space. This process involved formally developing criteria for open space. In 2015, the Commission utilized those criteria to formally map parcels for preservation on McMillan Mesa and expressed their opinion to City Council with a letter. In 2015, the Commission drafted the Open Space Strategic Plan.

E. Update on Open Space Strategic Plan

McKenzie Jones, Staff Liaison, provided a brief history of the Open Space Strategic Plan and Commissioners discussed the current status of the plan and its associated map. The Strategic Plan was developed to articulate the vision for the open space system in Flagstaff and specifically indicates conservation criteria and priority areas within the community and also creates a formal mechanism for public and internal departments to address the Open Spaces Commission. Additionally, the document outlines conservation tools to indicate that multiple mechanisms are available to conserve land other than acquisition. The Commission focused on designating priority areas that met multiple conservation criteria. The draft Strategic Plan was publically vetted at the 2014 regional Open Space Symposium. Commissioners discussed the importance of distinguishing between vacant lands and designated open space as a means of building support. Ms. Jones offered to meet with new Commissioners individually to discuss the evolution of the Strategic Plan in more detail. The Commission will work with Staff at the next Commission meeting to finalize the map component.

F. Open Space Management Update

Betsy Emery, Open Space Aide, provided an open space management update for the Commission. The City is currently working through the cultural clearance and approval processes for the \$74,000 Recreational Trails Program grant they were awarded for trail maintenance and improvement projects at Picture Canyon. City Staff believe these funds will be available in early November. Additionally, the City is working to obtain appropriate approvals for the "Locus D" trail at Picture Canyon and is consulting with affiliated tribes. The City contracted with Pilkington Advertising Design to complete a series of interpretive signs at Picture Canyon that will cover wildlife, vegetation, cultural resources, and wetland ecology. The Tom Moody Trail alignment at Picture Canyon has been completed and will be temporarily signed soon. Lastly, the Picture Canyon Management Plan is undergoing its final review process and will go to Council in September for formal adoption.

5. Information Items To and From Commissioners and Staff

Commissioner Burton commented on the recent article in the Arizona Daily Sun titled "Are We Loving the Forest to Death?" and expressed interest in finalizing the Open Space Strategic Plan and bringing nearly completed drafts of planning documents to the Commission in the future. Commissioner Gist informed the Commission the Flagstaff

Watershed Protection Project has produced the final record of decision and will likely be moving forward with projects on the ground before the end of summer. Commissioner Gist also informed the group of the annual Arizona Game and Fish Department Elk Workshop on August 15th at Mormon Lake. Commissioner Eberly informed the group of the annual Diablo Trust Campout Under the Stars at Ashurst Lake on August 22nd. Commissioner Wyse indicated that she is looking forward to getting more involved in the open space community as a Commissioner. Chair Miller also serves on the Friend of the Rio Board, an organization that is embarking on an extensive planning document for the Rio. Nicole Woodman, Sustainability Program Manager, informed the group that the City Adopt-A program is being renamed the Community Stewards program and will include open space trail components and portions of the Rio. McKenzie Jones, Staff Liaison, informed the group that the Community Garden Workshop Series is underway and the Sustainability Program is hosting a Fix It Clinic on July 25th at Local Works.

6. Agenda Items for Next Meeting – August 27, 2015

A. Discussion of the Strategic Plan and Map

B. Picture Canyon Natural and Cultural Preserve Management Plan

C. Livestock Animal Keeping Code

7. Adjournment

Commissioner Miller motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:57pm. Commissioner Burton seconded the motion.

CERTIFICATION OF POSTING OF NOTICE

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the foregoing notice was duly posted at Flagstaff City Hall on____
_____, at _____ a.m./p.m. in accordance with the statement filed by the Disability Awareness
Commission with the City Clerk.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Chris Monteverde, Administrative Specialist